AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. **(currently amended)** A method of operating a host in a network of a plurality of hosts, ~~the method~~ comprising the steps of:

receiving a request to send data to a number of other, destination ~~("destination")~~ hosts;

comparing the number of destination hosts in the request with the value of a parameter;

if the number of destination hosts is greater than the parameter's value, inhibiting transmission of at least part of the request;

the parameter's value being reduced with each transmission of a request to a destination host, and incremented with the passage of each time interval in which no requests are transmitted.

2. **(currently amended)** A method according to claim 1 wherein <u>the</u> inhibiting <u>step</u> ~~transmission of at least part of the request~~ comprises the step of diverting <u>said</u> at least part of the request to a delay buffer.

3. (original) A method according to claim 2 further comprising the step of

transmitting the request in the delay buffer when the value of the parameter is incremented to a value equal to the number of destination hosts identified in the at least part of the request in the delay buffer.

4. **(currently amended)** A method according to claim 1 wherein if the number of

destination hosts <u>in the request</u> is equal to or less than the value of the parameter, the request is transmitted <u>to all destination hosts identified in the request</u>.

5. (original)   A method according to claim 1 wherein the request is an email specifying multiple recipients.

6. (canceled)

7. **(currently amended)**   A method according to claim 1 wherein, upon transmission of [[a]] <u>the</u> request <u>to all destination hosts,</u> the <u>value of the</u> parameter is reset to zero.

8. (original)   A method according to claim 5 wherein the multiple recipient email is processed as a plurality of single recipient emails, and the email is sent to a number of destination hosts equal to the value of the parameter.

9. (original)   A method according to claim 5 wherein the multiple recipient email is processed as a single email.

10. **(currently amended)**   A method according to claim 9 wherein the email is delayed until sufficient time intervals have passed in which no requests are transmitted for the <u>value of the</u> parameter to be equal to the number of ~~requests~~ <u>destination hosts</u> in the ~~buffer~~ <u>request</u>.

11. **(currently amended)**   A method according to claim 1 <u>wherein</u> ~~wherein~~ the parameter has a predetermined maximum value determined in accordance with a policy.

12. (original)   A method according to claim 1 wherein upon transmission of a request the parameter is decremented by a number equal to the number of transmitted requests.

13. (original) A method according to claim 12 wherein the parameter has a minimum value of zero.

14. **(currently amended)**   A computing entity adapted to process a request to send an email to multiple recipients by:

comparing the number of recipients in the request with ~~the value of a parameter~~ a threshold value;

if the number of recipients is greater than the ~~parameter~~ threshold value, inhibiting transmission of the ~~message~~ email to at least some of the recipients;

adjusting the threshold value ~~of the parameter in accordance with a policy~~ by

reducing [[it]] said threshold value with each transmission of the email ~~a request~~ to one of the recipients ~~a destination host~~, and

incrementing [[it]] said threshold value with the passage of each time interval in which the email is not ~~no requests are~~ transmitted to any of the recipients; and

allowing transmission of the email to at least one of said at least some of the recipients when the threshold value is incremented to a value equal to the number of said at least some of the recipients.

15. **(currently amended)**   A computing entity according to claim 14 adapted to send inhibited messages to a delay buffer.

16. (canceled)

17. (original) A computing entity according to claim 14 wherein the entity is one of a server and a client.

18. (original)   A network having a plurality of computing entities according to claim 14.

19. **(currently amended)**   A memory storing a computer program adapted for use on a computing entity in a network, the program ~~product~~ being adapted to instruct the entity to:

receive a request to send a message to multiple recipients;

compare the number of recipients in the request with the value of a parameter;

if the number of recipients is greater than the ~~parameter~~ value of the parameter, inhibit transmission of the message to at least some of the recipients; [[and]]

adjust the value of the parameter ~~in accordance with a policy~~ by

reducing [[it]] said value with each transmission of the message ~~a request~~ to a ~~destination host~~ one of the recipients, and

incrementing [[it]] said value with the passage of each time interval in which the message is not ~~no requests are~~ transmitted to any of the recipients; and

allowing transmission of the message to at least one of said at least some of the recipients when the value is incremented to be equal to the number of said at least some of the recipients.

20. (original)   A memory according to claim 19 wherein the program is arranged to cause the computer entity to store inhibited messages.

21. **(currently amended)**   A memory according to claim 20 wherein the program is arranged to cause the computer entity to transmit a stored message when the value of the parameter is incremented to a value equal to the number of recipients identified in the inhibited messages which are being stored.

22. **(new)**   A method according to claim 2, further comprising

monitoring a size of said delay buffer; and

generating a virus alert when a rate at which the size of said delay buffer increases is greater than a predetermined threshold.

23. **(new)**   A computing entity according to claim 14 wherein the entity is further adapted to adjust the threshold value by

incrementing said threshold value with the passage of each time interval in which no new requests to send a multiple recipient e-mail are received from a user who sent said request.